



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, August 2, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report that Prime Minister Abe has decided to appoint Foreign Minister Kishida as the chairman of the LDP's Policy Research Council and LDP Diet Affairs Committee Chairman Wataru Takeshita as the party's General Council chairman. NTV, Fuji TV, and TBS gave top play to reports that Abe has decided to tap former Defense Minister Onodera as the new defense chief in the cabinet reshuffle scheduled for tomorrow and to also appoint Seiko Noda to a cabinet position. TV Asahi reported that LDP policy chief Motegi will also be given a cabinet portfolio.

INTERNATIONAL

Secretary Tillerson expresses hope to ultimately hold dialogue with DPRK

NHK and all commercial networks reported on a press conference held on Tuesday by Secretary Tillerson, during which he expressed a strong sense of crisis over North Korea, which is accelerating its nuclear and missile development. He was quoted as saying: "I think as many of you have watched over the last several months, the threat has materialized." According to NHK, the Secretary expressed a negative view about the use of military force against the North, and reiterated that the U.S. will continue to apply pressure on North Korea to completely abandon its nuclear and missile development programs. The network said the Secretary also said the U.S. is not calling for a regime change in North Korea, and that it will seek to ultimately hold dialogue with the North. The network quoted the Secretary as saying: "We are trying to convey to the North Koreans we are not your enemy. We are not your threat. We hope that at some point they will begin to understand that and we would like to sit and have a dialogue with them about the future."

Asahi took up the GOJ's reaction to the Secretary's remarks on possible dialogue with the DPRK, quoting Chief Cabinet Secretary as telling the press this morning: "The Secretary made the remarks

while explaining the U.S.'s policy of stepping up pressure. Now is the time to ratchet up the pressure.... In order to hold meaningful dialogue with North Korea, it is extremely important for North Korea to show its serious will and take concrete actions toward denuclearization. Japan would like to ask North Korea strongly to take concrete actions toward the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula under the principles of dialogue and pressure and action for action."

Meanwhile, NHK reported that Republican Senator Graham appeared on an NBC program on Tuesday and disclosed his conversation with President Trump, saying that the President referred to the possibility of waging war against North Korea if it continues to develop ICBMs. The Senator also reportedly said that there are military options for destroying North Korea's missile and nuclear development programs or destroying North Korea itself.

GOJ worried about disarray in the White House

TV-Asahi "Hodo Station" reported on the turmoil associated with the apparent power struggle underway at the White House, with former Kyodo News managing editor Goto claiming that the GOJ is deeply troubled by President Trump's continued failure to institute discipline in the White House based on the assessment that the U.S. administration may choose to step up pressure on its trading partners, including Japan, in order to deflect public attention from stalled domestic policy agenda items, such as the proposed repeal of Obamacare. According to the commentator, Tokyo is bracing for Washington to take issue with Japan's implementation of safeguard measures against a surge in U.S. beef imports. The journalist said the Abe administration is desperately hoping that the U.S. leader will be able to put the White House in order by the time he visits Tokyo in November because Japan would have nothing to gain from the U.S. becoming "weak" as a result of the disarray in the White House.

- [No successor in sight for Ambassador Sasae as he begins his sixth year in Washington](#) (Sentaku)
- [Editorial: Japan, U.S. must be truly committed to dealing with North Korean threat](#) (The Japan News)

POLITICS

- [Abe to replace top envoy Kishida, pick Onodera as defense chief](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Survey of newspaper editorials on Defense Minister Inada's resignation](#) (Sankei)
- [Cartoon: Inada fizzles](#) (Sankei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Aug. 1](#) (Nikkei)

ECONOMY

- [Japan to make new proposal on total allowable catch quotas for bluefin tuna](#) (Mainichi)
- [METI leaning toward not including “expansion of nuclear power plants” in new Basic Energy Plan](#) (Asahi)
- [Aichi to consider casino projects](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gov’t to hold public hearings on casinos nationwide](#) (Asahi)

EDUCATION

- [Letter to the Editor: Believe in the power of a smile and change the world](#) (Asahi)

SOCIETY

Doctor Hinohara’s final message

NHK "Close-up Gendai+" reported on physician Shigeaki Hinohara, who passed away at the age of 105 in July. Hinohara had been working actively even after the age of 100 to create a society where elderly people can contribute to society and lead meaningful lives. The program said Hinohara had questioned himself and others on how to spend life's final moments, adding that he strongly believed that people should be able to express their feelings of gratitude to their loved ones before they die, even if it is only through eye contact. Hinohara's daughter-in-law said that he was able to thank all his family members before he passed away. The program also said he was passionate about helping others, adding that he had a strong will to live until the very end.

- [Transgender convict in Hokkaido asks to be treated as female inmate](#) (The Japan Times)

SECURITY

- [Former Defense Minister Onodera discusses steps for enhancing missile defense](#) (Gaiko)
- [Japan, U.S. mull Osprey night-flight training in Hokkaido](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Internal affairs ministry to set up new bureau to handle cyberattacks](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japanese expats question SDF, Abe appearances in overseas TV spots](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

- [U.S. military's flight training intensifying in Okinawa, Kanagawa](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)



Enhanced “synchronization” between White House, U.S. military raises concern in Okinawa

A Washington correspondent for the Okinawa Times took up President Trump’s appointment of Homeland Security Secretary Kelly as White House chief of staff, noting that the former Marine general’s transfer to the West Wing probably represents the administration’s greater dependence on the U.S. military and the Defense Department, which is also led by a former Marine general, at the expense of the State Department, at which only one of 32 senior posts has been filled thus far. The writer speculated that the U.S. military will enjoy a greater say when the administration makes key foreign policy decisions. While asserting that the repeated parachute drop training, continued use of the Navy apron, and frequent operations by transient aircraft at Kadena AB are evidence of the U.S. military’s disregard of Okinawa, the journalist expressed hope that Ambassador Hagerty will be able to facilitate communications between the parties involved when addressing local concerns about the U.S. military in the island prefecture. However, the reporter voiced qualms that the Ambassador and the beleaguered State Department will not be able to “apply the brakes” on the U.S. military, which she explained has become increasingly “synchronized” with the White House.

- [U.S. military, Okinawa officials attend ceremony for Futenma land return](#) (Okinawa Times, Ryukyu Shimpo)
- [U.S. military truck drives wrong way on Okinawa road](#) (Okinawa Times)